

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 3, 6 to 8, 10 to 12, and 15 to 18 are pending.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 was objected to for informalities. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended and withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 3, 6 to 8, 10 to 12, and 15 to 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Marusak et al., U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2004/0048142, in view of Larson, U.S. Patent No. 6,690,140, and Hatton, U.S. Patent No. 5,739,737.

In rejecting a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Examiner bears the initial burden of presenting a *prima facie* case of obviousness. In re Rijckaert, 9 F.3d 1531, 1532, 28 U.S.P.Q.2d 1955, 1956 (Fed. Cir. 1993). To establish *prima facie* obviousness, three criteria must be satisfied. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation to modify or combine reference teachings. In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). This teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination must be found in the prior art and not based on the application disclosure. In re Vaeck, 947 F.2d 488, 20 U.S.P.Q.2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. In re Merck & Co., Inc., 800 F.2d 1091, 231 U.S.P.Q. 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Third, the prior art reference(s) must teach or suggest all of the claim features. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974).

Claim 1 is to a "vehicle electrical system powered by a battery to supply a plurality of loads," which includes "an integrated module positioned between a positive terminal of the battery and the plurality of loads" having "a terminal at which a generator is connectable," and in which "the integrated module further *includes an electronics unit for at least one of regulation and diagnosis of the generator.*"

The Marusak, Larson, and Hatton references do not disclose or even suggest an integrated module that "includes an electronics unit for at least one of regulation and diagnosis of the generator," as provided for in the context of claim 1. The Office Action admits that the Marusak reference does not teach or suggest the feature, but argues that the feature is found in the Larson reference, stating "col. 3 lines 43-53 describes how ESC 30, in combination with other controllers, execute a battery management program that regulates and diagnoses the battery 1 pack by making adjustments to the generator output. Since the battery is directly connected to the generator, the generator output is also effectively diagnosed."

Office Action at 4. However, the reference does not disclose (or even suggest) regulation or diagnosis of a generator. Contrary to the Office Action's assertion, the Larson reference does not describe the feature of "execut[ing] a battery management program that regulates and diagnoses the battery 1 pack *by making adjustments to the generator output.*" *Id.* Rather, the Larson reference only states that "a controllable voltage regulator 21 [is] used for regulating the recharging of battery pack 25" col. 3, l. 41-42. In addition, while the Office Action asserts that "[s]ince the battery is directly connected to the generator, the generator output is also effectively diagnosed," *Id.*, the Larson reference itself shows that the alternator is not directly connected to the battery but is at most connected through a "voltage regulator." Figs. 1-3. Even if the Larson reference did describe (which is not conceded) connecting an alternator so as to make regulating and diagnosing the alternator possible, the reference does not disclose or suggest providing "an electronics unit for at least one of regulation and diagnosis of the generator," as provided for in the context of claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2, 3, 6 to 8, 10 to 12, and 15 to 18 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims 1 to 3, 6 to 8, 10 to 12, and 15 to 18 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn, since all issues raised have been addressed and obviated. An early and favorable action on the merits is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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